

**Education Development Center  
Time to Learn Project  
QUARTERLY REPORT  
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FY 2015 Quarter 3  
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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASRH	Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
COP/DCOP	Chief of Party/Deputy Chief of Party
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CS	Community School
DAPP	Development Aid from People to People
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DRCC	District Resource Center Coordinator
DSWAC	District Welfare Assistance Committee
ECZ	Examinations Council of Zambia
EDC	Education Development Center
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ELM	Education Leadership and Management
FAWEZA	Forum for African Women Educationalists in Zambia
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
MESVTEE	Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OGCS	Operational Guidelines for Community Schools
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
PCC	Project Coordination Committee
PCSC	Parents Community School Committee
PLP	Primary Literacy Program
POC	Provincial Outreach Coordinator
RTS	Read to Succeed Project
SCOPE	Standards-based Classroom Observation Protocol for Educators
SBC	School Based Selection Committees
TESS	Teacher Education and Specialized Services
TTL	Time to Learn
TLC/TGM	Teachers Learning Circle / Teachers Group Meeting
TLM	Teaching/Learning Material

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
WASH	School Water and Sanitation and Hygiene Education Project
ZIC	Zonal In-Service Coordinator

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During the 2nd quarter of FY 2015:

TTL focused on the midline impact evaluation data, drafting the TTL midline report.

TTL also conducted a series of dissemination events for the midline evaluation results: it was presented to senior MESVTEE official together with RTI and Room To Read as well as to members of the Project Coordination Committee.

One thousand eight hundred and six (1806) Community School Teachers (1085 M and 723 F) were trained in literacy instruction with mobile phones and instructional videos as a medium for the training. Head teachers trained their respective teachers in their schools to model teaching practices. The training program was completed.

41 (25 M/ 16 F) administrators were trained in e-EGRA Instruct in Luapula provinces. The training was organized with PEO funds and facilitated by the TTL Leadership specialist. These trainings included Provincial and District Education Standards Officers and Resource Center Coordinators. The e-EGRA Instruct instrument will allow these officials to provide better qualitative support to early grade teachers in the literacy domain.

PEO officials have trained 303 (193 males and 110 females) Zonal In-Service Coordinators in the use of this formative assessment tool.

With PEO/DEBS officials TTL paid Scholarships for 2426 (1191 M / 1235 F) Orphans and Vulnerable Children. Before paying scholarships, TTL verified that beneficiaries had received their 2014 entitlements, and verified current beneficiaries' enrolment and attendance.

The TTL COP, DCOP and ELM Specialist participated to the Joint Annual Review (JAR) held from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 in Western and in Luapula provinces.

## **I. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The Time to Learn (TTL) project is USAID/Zambia's education program which aims to improve educational outcomes among orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) enrolled in community schools. TTL partners with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, Vocational Training, and Early Education (MESVTEE) to develop an effective, replicable and sustainable model for improving reading performance and responding to the economic, social and psychological complexities faced by OVC. This includes providing scholarships to assist OVC to transition from community to government schools.

TTL's key purpose is to sustainably improve the quality of education in community schools and institutionalize, in a decentralized way, MESVTEE support to community schools to stabilize their operations. This is being done by providing educational resources, improving teacher skills and school management, and enhancing learner support through community and private sector participation.

Addressing four key task areas, TTL assists the MESVTEE to:

- Promote a favorable environment for MESVTEE engagement at all levels to support community schools
- Promote HIV/AIDS prevention and provide a continuum of educational and financial support to enable OVC to participate in upper basic and secondary education
- Develop the capacity of local community groups and NGOs to advocate for opportunities for children in greatest need
- Support opportunities to engage universities and other institutions in research related to promoting educational opportunities for OVC.

## **II. PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD**

### **Achievements**

The following were achieved during the reporting period:

- 1806 (1085 M /723 F) teachers trained in the phone literacy program (literacy contents and training of trainers);
- 41 ( 25 M/ 16 F) administrators and 303 (193 males and 110 females) ZICS trained in the utilization of e-EGRA, the TTL reading performance monitoring instrument;
- 202 teacher mentors have been trained (160 female and 42 male) in psycho-social counseling.
- 2426 (1191M/ 1235 F) scholarship paid this quarter. However an additional 704 (372M/ 332 F) scholarships were paid by the time of the submission of this report.
- Mid-Term Evaluation report submitted and disseminated to MESVTEE and partners.

### **Results Table**

Standard & Custom Indicators	LOP Target	LOP Cumulative (As of FY15 Q3)	Y4 2015 Target	Y4 2015 Prior Results	Y4 2015 Quarter 3	Y4 2015 Cumulative
Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support	<b>5,134</b> (3,294M, 1,840F)	<b>4,593</b> (3,216M, 1,377F)	<b>800</b> (520M, 280F)	<b>1121</b> (802 M, 319 F)	<b>48*</b> (31 M, 17 F)	<b>1,169</b> (833 M, 336F)
Percentage of zonal, district, provincial and other MESTVEE entities monitoring community schools systematically	<b>80%</b>	<b>94%</b>	70%	-	94%	94%
Percentage of TTL community schools receiving increased support from the MESVTEE	<b>20%</b>	<b>61%</b>	15%	61%	-	61%**
The proportion of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text	<b>30%</b>	-	-	-	-	-
The number of learners in TTL supported community schools with reading skill gains	<b>500,000</b>	-	N/A	-	-	-



Number of teachers/ educators/ teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support	<b>11,266</b> (6,634 M, 4,632F)	<b>10,367</b> (5,915M, 4,452F)	<b>1,850</b> (1,160 M, 790 F)	<b>502</b> (331 M, 171 F)	<b>1304</b> (753 M, 551 F)	<b>1,806</b> (1,084M, 722 F)
Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance	<b>400,000</b>	<b>402,657</b>	62,000	1233	0	1,233
Number of Parent-Teacher Associations or Similar "School" governance structures supported with USG assistance	<b>6,100</b>	<b>4,901</b>	850	116	659	775
Number of learners enrolled in primary schools and/or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support	<b>500,000</b> (250,000M, 250,000F)	Grades 1-7 <b>441,037</b> (218712 M 222325 F) Grades 1-4 <b>294,662</b> (145692M 148970F)	<b>500,000</b> (250,000M 250,000F)	<b>Grades 1-7</b> <b>441,037</b> (218,712M 222,325F)	-	<b>441,037</b> (218,712M, 222,325F)

PEPFAR: # of beneficiaries served by PEPFAR OVC programs for children and families affected by HIV/AIDS	<b>48,000</b>	<b>40,345</b> (17,666M, 22,679F)	<b>8,000</b> (3,200M, 4,800F)	<b>3,768</b> (1,628M, 2,140F)	<b>2,426</b> (1,191 M, 1,235 F)	<b>6,194</b> (2,819M, 3,375F)
Number of teachers in USG supported programs trained in how to support learners psychological well-being	<b>5,522</b> (3,221M, 2,301F)	<b>776</b> (73M, 703F)	<b>950</b> (630M, 320F)	-	<b>202</b> (42M, 160F)	<b>202</b> (42M, 160F)

\*46 of the administrators trained came from the e-EGRA training conducted by the project in Luapula province

\*\* In the last quarter, increased MESTVEE support was reported as the increase in the percentage of schools reporting increased MESTVEE support across the seven different possible domains of support between the baseline and midline evaluation. In an attempt to better quantify the amount of increased support from MESTVEE to schools over the course of the project, we are revising our reported number from the midline as 61% of schools reporting increased support. This number was derived by calculating the percentage of schools that moved from receiving 1-3 different types of support from the MESTVEE at baseline to 4-7 different types of support at midline. This calculation will be used at endline to calculate our final percentage for this indicator.

**Notes on the results table:**

- 1) **Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support** Results exceeded expectation because of a very good attendance on both Phone Based Literacy Instruction with Phones Training and e-EGRA Instruct trainings of administrators/school Head Teachers. The Project had planned for 80% attendance and actually trained 95% of targeted Head Teachers. In addition, new Community Schools were created in the targeted areas and TTL had to train more Head Teachers than anticipated.
- 2) **Percentage of zonal, district, provincial and other MESTVEE entities monitoring community schools systematically.** TTL considers that ZICs must have monitored at least 2 schools in the school year to be considered as “monitoring systematically”. All ZICs have engaged in Community School Monitoring, however a) majority have not reported yet, and b) several reports show only one school monitored at the reporting time. TTL expects the results to be on target by the end of next quarter.
- 3) **Number of teachers/ educators/ teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support.** Head Teachers and

ZICs are currently conducting school based teacher training activities. To qualify as “trained”, each teacher must provide evidence that she/he has covered all the topics of the Literacy Instruction with Phone Training. The evidence includes signed and validated attendance records of school level trainings.

- 4) **Number of Parent-Teacher Associations or Similar "School" governance structures supported with USG assistance:** PCSC were supported as ZICs facilitated mini-workshop with them to develop school improvement plans.

### **III. SUMMARY OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

#### **A. TECHNICAL**

<b>TASK 6.1 INSTITUTIONALIZE AND ACCELERATE MESVTEE ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON IMPROVED READING OUTCOMES (40%)</b>
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<b>TASK 6.1A: IMPROVE READING INSTRUCTION IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS</b>
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#### **Introduction**

The Time to Learn (TTL) Project goal is to assist the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) through a five-year national program to provide an equitable standard of education service for vulnerable learners, improve reading skills, and implement practical strategies to strengthen school quality and promote community engagement in community schools. The project has given support to community schools by providing educational resources, improving teacher skills and school management, improving learner performance in reading, and enhancing learner support in reading through community participation. Last quarter, TTL continued a new approach for strengthening literacy instruction in schools by integrating the Stepping Stone mobile platform into our training procedures. This quarter TTL embarked on monitoring the school-based phone training activities, finalized the eEGRA instruct activity book, and also began the vernacular pilot study in the Lusaka province.

#### **Activities and results**

##### **Monitoring of Literacy Phone Trainings School-Based (Early Grade Reading Stepping Stone)**

After a packed training schedule which concluded in the last Quarter at the district level, TTL continued to use its innovative approach to train teachers at the school level in community schools throughout its six (6) catchment provinces (Eastern, Lusaka, Central, Muchinga, Southern and Copperbelt). Community School Teachers were trained using Education Development Center's (EDCs) Stepping Stone platform and TTL designed content loaded on the Nokia model 111 mobile phones. These trainings were being conducted by Head teachers and ZICs who were trained at district level in the previous quarters in FY15. In this quarter, TTL began to monitor the school based trainings to assess both challenges and successes and to learn how effective the initiative has been thus far, especially focusing on how the teachers are using

the information from the phones as they prepare their literacy lessons. The table below illustrates the monitoring schedule from this quarter.

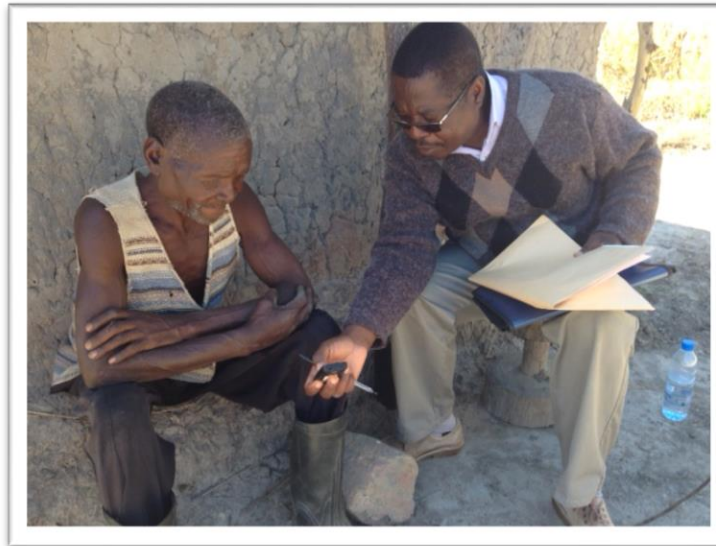


Figure 1 TTL Trainer B. Chishimba demonstrates how to access phone content for a Head Teacher

Date(s)	Province(s)	District(s)	Number of schools monitored
26/5/2015	Lusaka	Chilanga	3
27/5/2015	Lusaka	Chongwe	3
28/05/2015	Lusaka	Rufunsa	4
29/05/2015	Lusaka	Kafue	3
03/06/2015	Central	Kapiri Mposhi	6
04/06/2015	Central	Chibombo	6
10/06/2015	Copper Belt	Ndola	4
11/06/2015	Copper belt	Kitwe	2
11/06/2015	Copper belt	Mufulira	3
12/06/2015	Copper belt	Luanshya	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>36</b>

36 Community Schools were monitored in 3 provinces during this quarter and the monitoring visits produced a varied set of information. Some observations from the monitoring include:

- Most teachers including government teachers have applauded the letter sound instruction on the phones, which are organized by language of instruction. It is interesting to note here that though TTL does not specifically target government schools, monitoring uncovered that Zonal In-Service Coordinators (ZICs) also include government teachers in their trainings when focusing on content on the phone. Often times both community and government teachers are trained together when such trainings are conducted by the ZICs, with government teacher training costs covered by the ZIC's budget.

- School-based phone trainings are happening in most schools/zones visited.
- Some zones prefer training all teachers within their zones together so that they receive the same information.
- Teachers are able to make teaching and learning materials using the ideas from the phones.



Figure 2 Letter cards and sound cards created by DAPP Community School, Chibombo District

- In some schools that have not trained their staff yet, teachers are using their personal phones to import the literacy videos from a neighboring community school so that they can use the information on their own even if they are not yet trained by their head teacher (Madalitso Community School in Rufunsa district). This demonstrates the need as well as the desire for teachers to acquire new skills and knowledge to help improve the literacy levels of their students.

Despite some of these initial successes, there remain quite a few challenges that were uncovered over the course of the monitoring visits. These included:

- Some community schools that received training are now temporary closed due to various reasons that include non-payments to volunteer teachers.
- Some schools are managed by one person, who is charged with instructing all grades.
- Some head teachers cite that they are overwhelmed with responsibilities and have failed to conduct phone trainings at their various schools.
- Some head teachers have simply failed to conduct follow up trainings
- Some schools who have conducted trainings have not accurately recorded these activities because they found the attendance forms confusing

Given the above, TTL has learned several lessons from the initial monitoring of the school level phone training activity:

- Phone training has positively impacted literacy instruction especially among grade 1 and 2 teachers.
- Teachers who have attended the phone trainings are now able to conduct some read-alouds to learners every day and ask questions based on the story: the first step toward reading comprehension.
- Attrition continues to be a concern given that there is often high-turnover and even instances where schools move from one location to the next.



Figure 3 Community School classroom in Luanshya, Copperbelt

### Evaluation and Printing of Stories in the 3 local languages

Previously, TTL had conducted training on story writing in Copperbelt and Lusaka provinces in schools that had received the Total Community Library Box in 2014. After the story writing training, teachers were asked to write short stories with their learners based on the principles and techniques acquired during the training. The stories, written by teachers and their learners, were sent to the TTL Lusaka office and some were selected to be printed through a continued partnership with TOTAL Zambia. This selection includes a number of stories, listed by language in the table below. During this quarter the selected stories are being evaluated and edited by the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) which reviews and approves materials that enter the Zambian classroom.

Language	Total number of stories written	Total number of selected stories
Icibemba	10	6
Icitonga	16	7
Cinyanja	12	8

Each group of the selected stories for each language will make up one book. This means there will be one book title for each language containing different short stories. Total Zambia is sponsoring the final development of these books of which 450 books will be printed in each language. These will be distributed among the schools which received the Total Library Community Book Box. The procedure for the development of these books is as follows:

- A. Evaluation of stories by CDC (currently with Evaluation team at CDC).
- B. Editing and finalization by the Evaluation team (CDC).
- C. Formatting camera ready copies (TTL)

- D. Printing 450 for each title (Total Zambia has committed to fund, approximately \$12,000)
- E. Ceremony to present the awards to the winning schools (Total Zambia has committed to fund).

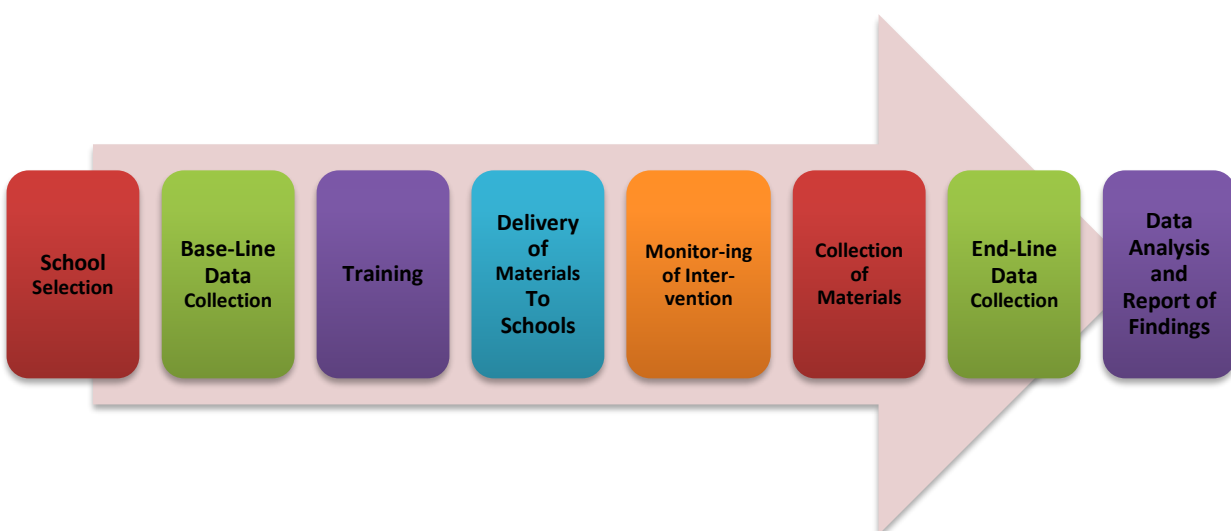
This activity is expected to be finished in the next quarter (Q4, FY15).

### **Finalization of Activity Handbook for eEGRA**

Time To learn had embarked on training the MESVTEE officials on how to use eEGRA tool when monitoring literacy in schools. However, after monitoring using the tool, there is need for the monitors to give critical and constructive feedback to teachers so that they are aware of the areas and skills that need attention based on learner performance. The Activity Handbook for eEGRA focuses on the key reading competencies and has a variety of activities that go from simple to more complex. The book has been completed and awaits CDC approval before it can be sent to districts and schools for use. This is expected to be completed in the next quarter.

### **Vernacular Pilot Study**

Vernacular is a series of three literacy activities using the Stepping Stone Application, which is the same application that is used on then Nokia 111 mobile phones. For Vernacular, literacy activities are used to target early grade literacy in CiNyanja. The program follows the MESVTEE National Literacy Framework and phonics based approach to literacy. Vernacular is a teaching and learning aid which can be based on paper or tablets for use in the classroom by early grade readers. The Pilot Study began with a feasibility test done in Q1 FY 15, which was conducted in four schools with the tablet-based version only. The Pilot Study aims to determine the cost-benefit of using Vernacular on tablets. The study has a series of phases as shown below which will be conducted from April of 2015 until December 2015:





Phases which were undertaken during this quarter were:

1. School Selection
2. Base-Line Data Collection
3. Teacher/Head Teacher Training
4. Delivery of Materials To Schools

Phase Descriptions:

1. School selection consisted of a pre-selection of three pilot districts in Lusaka Province, Chongwe, Chilanga, and Kafue. All community schools in these three districts were considered to be eligible, after which 30 schools were identified as chosen participants based on certain criteria for each school as follows: availability of power, lockable storage, Head Teachers who had attended the Early Grade Stepping Stone Training (EGSST), and language of instruction (CiNyanja). After the schools were selected a random assignment of treatments was given to the schools- 10 Control Schools, 10 Paper Based Vernacular Schools, and 10 Tablet Based Vernacular Schools.



Figure 4 A rural community school. Photo Credit Johanna Raoeliarindranto



2. Seven MESVTEE officials attended a 2 day refresher training for eEGRA Instruct at the TTL HQ offices in Kabulonga. All of these MESVTEE officials previously attended a four(4) day training on the same tool. The MESVTEE officials trained were then separated into teams and given schedules of participating schools and the number of Grade 1 learners at each school to be assessed. This phase included informed consent protocols to obtain permission from the school administration and Parent Community School Committee as well as individual permission from each learner who was randomly selected to participate in the assessment.
3. For each of the intervention schools (Paper Based Vernacular and Tablet Based Vernacular) one Head Teacher and one Grade 1 teacher were invited to attend a one day orientation on the Vernacular program and the respective materials meant for intervention at each of their schools. Each Grade 1 teacher was given an opportunity to conduct a practical lesson-using Vernacular with learners from the local school. Head Teachers observed the teacher from their school during the practical and gave feedback. A second day of orientation was conducted at each of the schools when materials were delivered in Phase 4 which included Attendance Register procedures. All control schools also received a shorter orientation only on Attendance Register procedures.



“The facilitators were inspiring and knowledgeable. The training was very important to me because it introduced me to new technology and it also improved my literacy teaching skill.” – Head Teacher, Kafue District

4. Material Delivery consisted of 8 days of school visits, verification of lockable storage, and material orientation. Information given at all three sets of schools (Control, Paper Based Vernacular, and Tablet Based Vernacular). All participants in the Vernacular Pilot Study were asked concept questions to verify their understanding of expectations for the intervention. An incentive program was

Figure 5 Tablet based Vernacular training, Kafue District. Photo Credit Daniel Hanks



Figure 6 School based attendance register orientation, Chongwe District. Photo Credit Daniel Hanks



also explained across all 30 schools which would encourage proper attendance taking.



Figure 7 Grade 1 learners using tablets on delivery day in Chilanga District. Photo Credit Daniel Hanks

The summary numbers for Activities in Phase 1-4 During Q3 FY15 are illustrated in the table below:

# Of Teachers Oriented On Vernacular	# Of Head Teachers Oriented On Vernacular	# of Participating Schools	# Of Learners Assessed using eEGRA Instruct	# Of Vernacular Distributed Paper+ Tablets	# Of Monitoring Visits Conducted by TTL Staff	# Of MESVTEE Conducting eEGRA Instruct	# Of Monitoring Visits Conducted by MESVTEE
20	20	30	775	388	30	7	30

All intervention activities for the Vernacular Pilot Study will conclude in Q1 FY16.

### **Preparation of next training cycle**

TTL continued the preparation of nokia 111 mobile phones (uploading of the platform and content) for the round of training scheduled to begin in October 2015.

## **Plans for next quarter**

Major Teacher Development Plans for the next quarter include the following:

- Continued monitoring of the schools that have and have not conducted phone trainings
- Approval, printing and distribution of eEGRA Instruct Activity Booklet
- Final evaluation and printing of stories in 3 local languages from story writing competition
- Final preparation of phones for FY16 phone training
- Vernacular pilot study monitoring (Phase 5)
- Launch of Literacy via SMS portal system
- Distribution of Story Books in Luapula province

## **Challenges**

Some of the project's challenges remain, including how to mitigate the impact of teacher and administrator high turnover at community schools. Further, while the phone trainings were highly successful at the district level some evidence suggests that head teachers are at times unable to follow through with trainings at the school level. Thus, these challenges will need to be taken into consideration during the next quarter and more notably during the design and monitoring phase of activities.

<b>6.1. B: COORDINATE AND MAINSTREAM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AROUND SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND OVCS</b>
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### **Activities conducted during the quarter**

**Support to PCSC and design of School Improvement Plans:** During the reporting period, ZICs have continued to assist PCSCs in the design of their School Improvement Plans. ZICs planned small workshops with individual PCSCs and facilitated the self-assessment process, the identification of their individual needs, and the planning process for future improvement.

After the series of training conducted in 2013 and 2014 for PCSC members, TTL strategy is now to provide on-site support to PCSCs by helping them in designing a qualitative outcomes based School Improvement Plan (SIP), and to help PCSC monitoring SIP implementation. TTL will continue supporting ZICs' regular visits to PCSCs, particularly to help implement community based reading interventions and to involve parents in monitoring children's progress in reading.

#### **1. 2015 Joint Annual Review (JAR)**

The TTL COP, DCOP and ELM Specialist participated to the Joint Annual Review (JAR) held from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2015 in Western and in Luapula provinces, as well as in the summary conference in June.

The 2015 Joint Annual Review (JAR) took place in the context of the Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia II (JASZ II), which sets out the Cooperating Partners' (CPs) support to Zambia's Revised Sixth National Development Plan (RSNDP) 2011-16.

This is part of the sector dialogue mechanism which includes Government, Cooperating Partners (CPs), Civil Society, teachers' unions, private sector and other key stakeholders.

The main objective of the JAR is to assess performance across the whole education and skills sector from pre-primary to tertiary education.

The specific objectives of the 2015 JAR were:

- a) To review sector performance and implementation against the budget and the planned activities in the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) for the previous year (2014);
- b) To review sector performance and implementation against the agreed sector-wide indicators, targets and milestones set out in the education sector Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) for the previous year (2014);
- c) Provide input into the AWPB process for the coming year (2016); and
- d) Provide a forum for sharing information (policy dialogue) and experiences in the education sector among key stakeholders under a specific theme (Assessment) during the technical review meeting held from the 27<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> of May.

The theme of 2015 JAR was the implementation of the new curriculum. The main findings of the groups TTL was part of were:

- The curriculum is being implemented with support from all actors, including parents and communities. Teachers have changed teaching practices and use the new literacy framework. Observed were students who were "emergent readers".
- However, it is being affected by the low number of textbooks (when available), particularly in Community Schools. PEO and DEBS did not have sufficient budgets to distribute books.
- School grants were only partially paid, and generally only partially. Schools were complaining about the unpredictability of financial support.
- Schools could not implement some areas of the new curriculum (vocational orientation; ICT) for the lack of material/equipment.
- Actors (administrators, trainers/lecturers, teachers) need more training on the curriculum that the short orientation they had received.
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<b>TASK 6.1.C: PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT AND QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS SERVING IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS USING PRE SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING</b>
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**Activities conducted during the quarter**

All teacher training activities have been reported under the section 6.1A *Improve Reading Instruction in Community Schools*.

<b>TASK 6.1.D: PROVIDE TEXT BOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES TO IMPROVE THE TEACHING OF READING IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS</b>
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**Activities conducted during the quarter**

One hundred and eighteen (118) Tablets were distributed to 10 schools in Lusaka province as part of the Vernacular pilot.

<b>TASK 6.1.E: IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS</b>
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Education Leadership and Management was enhanced through the training of MESVTEE administrators in e-EGRA instruct, which will improve the quality of school monitoring as it brings the attention of monitors to students reading performance in early grades and allows for provision of constructive feedback.

The TTL Education Leadership and Management (ELM) Specialist conducted visits to Petauke, Katete, Chipata and Lundazi districts in Eastern Province to monitor the training of ZICs on e-EGRA Instruct and to support software tech support from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2015. During the visit, he monitored:

- The assessment of learners by ZICs using e-EGRA Instruct in Petauke and Chipata districts.
- The use of School Based Assessment and the implementation of the homework policy in community schools in Petauke, Chipata and Lundazi districts, including the use of school based assessment booklets.
- The implementation of school improvement plans.





**Figure 8** Learners at Magazine Community School

Summary of main findings of monitoring visit to Eastern province:

#### Successes

- Training of ZICs had been successfully conducted in all districts except Lundazi, Mambwe and Vubwi districts
- ZICs are able to assess reading levels of learners using eEGRA Instruct and notebooks donated by TTL
- Schools are using assessment booklets to record performance levels of learners. Schools are also keeping additional assessment records
- Schools are using attendance registers to show attendance of learners at school
- Schools which received enrollment forms are using these and found them very useful in keeping information about pupils, parents, contact details and health
- Schools have Improvement Plans worked out together with PCSC unlike in the past where these were non existent
- Schools are working more closely with PCSC and are able to raise funds from communities to pay volunteer teachers
- Phone training has assisted teachers to teach literacy and raise reading levels of learners

#### Main Challenges

- No proper record of distribution of TLMs at the office of the DRCC

- Some DEBS are not sending grants to Community schools where there are no seconded teachers who would be held accountable. There is need to second at least one trained teacher to every community school to improve accountability since volunteer teachers could leave any time
- Non availability of fuel for monitoring visits by ZICs using motor bikes which are already available
- Lack of incentives for volunteer teachers such as remuneration
- Lack of storage facilities at schools to be able to keep TLMs in most cases materials kept at head teacher's house
- Retention of learners negatively affected by early pregnancies, marriages and heading of cattle in some instances the ministry in Katete has engaged the traditional leadership i.e. Chief Mbang'ombe and chief Kawaza to help curb the three vices mentioned and the PCSC is supporting these efforts.
- In Lundazi, the PCSC has educated parents on the vice of making children cattle headers. The success is that parents and elderly people in the surrounding community have since taken up the role of cattle heading during school days. However, the parents have insisted that children head the cattle during holidays as this is part of traditional knowledge that should be passed- on through generations.

### **Improving MESVTEE information and data on Community Schools**

The ELM Specialist, Mr. Paul Machona also worked with MESVTEE to get updated data on community schools. These data were sent to Provincial Outreach Coordinators for verification. This includes the removal of closed community schools, adding new schools and verifying enrollment figures.

- Participated and successfully completed the Web-based training course in “Protecting Human Research Participants” conducted by the National Institute of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research. Certificate awarded on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2015.
- Conducted refresher training for vernacular assessors for the pilot study from 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015.
- Supervised assessment of learners for Vernacular pilot survey for Kafue and Chilanga districts from 26<sup>th</sup> May to 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2015. The assessment that was conducted was eEGRA instruct and was primarily conducted by various DRCCs and or Assistant DRCCs in schools within their districts and beyond.

<p><b>TASK 6.1.F: SUPPORT THE USE OF ASSESSMENT AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR IMPROVING READING INSTRUCTION TO ASSURE QUALITY IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS</b></p>
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### **Activities conducted during the quarter**



## **Training of MESVTEE Provincial and District Officials in eEGRA Instruct**

This quarter, TTL continued training MESVTEE officials in eEGRA Instruct, a formative assessment instrument designed to monitor students reading performance and to provide formative feedback to early grade teachers. All DRCCs and at least one ESO per district in Luapula province were trained in eEGRA Instruct. The training was conducted in Mansa from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2015. The training was conducted by the TTL Education Leadership and Management Specialist Paul Machona at the request of MESVTEE, and with funds from the PEO. The training was also an opportunity to orient the participants to the TTL project, and to stress the importance of including Community Schools in PEO and DEBS programming.

Forty one (41) participants attended the training, which included hands-on activities where each participant assessed learners in local schools. After assessing learners, participants were able to generate reports and get immediate feedback on student letter sound proficiency, nonsense word decoding, oral passage reading and comprehension. Participants were able to do comparisons in performance between gender, between learners, and between teachers using the result analysis generated by the software on their laptops. Participants were also able to get instructional advice from eEGRA Instruct which suggested remedial activities for improved learning and learner performance.

### **Training in eEGRA Instruct**

Installation of the software was done on the laptops participants came with. The following topics were covered during the training:

- An overview of literacy instructional theory
- The fundamental software operation for eEGRA Instruct Administration
- The laws and principles of reliable assessment
- Striving for inter-rater reliability
- Conducting results analysis
- Providing constructive feedback to teachers on student test results



Figure 9 eEGRA Instruct training in Luapula Province

After successful installation of the software, participants practiced the different EGRA tasks at length, including letter sounds, nonsense word decoding, oral passage reading, and reading comprehension. Then participants conducted result analysis.



Figure 10 A Learner being assessed at Kombaniya School in Mansa

Participants were reminded that the purpose of eEGRA Instruct was to:

- Measure reading abilities of learners
- Compare reading performance national standards to district / provincial means.
- Provide advice to teachers on how to improve performance of their learners.



Figure 11 A learner being assessed at Kombaniya Primary School

Assessment of learners was done at three schools, namely, Kombaniya Primary School, Chakopo and Mutende Primary Schools. Generally less than 5% of the learners could read. Participants were disappointed because they had the impression that most learners at grade 2 could read. However, participants were very impressed that the eEGRA Instruct was so effective in giving them immediate results regarding the performance of the learners. During the discussion of the results analysis, participants agreed on strategies to reverse the low reading levels in the visited schools. Participants agreed to do the following:

- To intensify Teachers' Group Meetings in all schools
- To intensify monitoring on the teaching of reading
- To train teachers in the teaching of reading since most of them have problems with letter sounds

At the end of the workshop, participants made a plan to roll out the training contents to Zonal Head teachers, ZICs, SICs and grades 1-4 teachers in all the 11 districts of Luapula Province. These training plans are to be completed by the end of August 2015.

Training of ZICS in eEGRA Instruct at district level was conducted by DRCCs and ESOs who were trained at Provincial level by TTL. The training at district level by DRCCs and ESOs was conducted using MESVTEE (district and zonal) funding and resources. 303 (193 males and 110 females) have been trained in Eastern, Muchinga, Southern, Central, Lusaka and Copperbelt

provinces. The training of ZICS is continuing as funds in the districts and zones become available from the MESVTEE. Through this activity and its important contribution to expanding TTL intervention, the PEOs, DEBS and Zones have demonstrated their interest in the strategy and instrument, and the sustainability of the intervention.

<b>TASK 6.2 IMPLEMENT HIV/AIDS PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND PROVIDE A CONTINUUM OF ACADEMIC AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ENABLE OVC PARTICIPATION IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION</b>
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### **Pay OVC scholarships to Secondary Schools**

A total of 6,194 (2,819 males / 3,375 females) orphans and vulnerable children have been supported with scholarships in the ten Provinces of Zambia. During the payment and verification exercise, it was found that 137 beneficiaries had dropped out. Payments for the remaining beneficiaries are still on going and will be completed by the end of July 2015.

In this quarter TTL paid out 2426 scholarships (1191M/ 1235F). In addition, 257 schools received funds to support costs related to the Health Clubs and Study Group activities.

### **Verification of Scholarship retirements**

The TTL finance office has focused on verifying the retirement of scholarships from schools paid in 2014 through verifying whether receipts submitted by schools were equal to the advance provided to the school and by confirming that students were paid their full scholarship entitlement.

### **Collection of outstanding 2013-2014 scholarship documentation**

Another activity conducted in the quarter was the collection of outstanding retirements for the scholarship payments made in 2013 & 2014. As per our regulations, all funds disbursed to the schools are expected to be retired before the schools can access additional funding; hence the large-scale exercise to collect all receipts and supporting documentation for the 2014 scholarship funds.

35 schools were not paid because they had not retired the 2014 scholarship funds. While paying other schools, TTL agents successfully collected the missing documentation. The target will be met once the outstanding schools submit the missing documentation and are subsequently cleared for 2015 payments.

### **Monitoring scholarship program**

This quarter, a total of 274 secondary schools were visited to monitor the activities of the SAFE Clubs and Study groups, as well as provide in-school technical support and guidance to the teacher mentors and study group coordinators

### **Beneficiaries Performance:**

Collection of scholarship beneficiary performance: to date, data has been collected for 1,117 OVC (507 male and 660 females) depicting performance in English, mathematics and sciences: 57% of the beneficiaries scored below the pass mark in all the subjects. 26% (270 beneficiaries) had average performance. 10% (104 beneficiaries) had good performance (between 66 and 74%) while only 7% (72) had very good scores above 75% in all the subjects.

TTL will submit a special report in September 2015 on beneficiaries' performance, as TTL partners are conducting an extensive data collection and analysis of performance for 2014 and 2015.

### **Training of Mentors/Teachers**

Two hundred and two (202) teacher mentors have been trained (160 female and 42 male). The purpose of the training was to enhance the skills of the SAFE Overseers in Psychosocial counseling, HIV/AIDS education / prevention and building beneficiaries' life skills. They were also trained on basic monitoring, record keeping and financial management skills in order to improve project interventions management. In addition, at least one (01) Education Standards officer from each of the trained provinces participated from the trainings as well in order to strengthen coordination and support from the MESVTEE to the scholarship program.

### **PLAN FOR NEXT QUARTER**

- Finalize the delivery of scholarships to the remaining OVCs in both grade 11 & 12
- Evaluate the capacity of Guidance and Counseling teachers to meet Psychosocial needs of OVCs in schools
- Train peer Educators
- Strengthen remedial academic support program to OVCs and track learner performance
- Review the delivery of interventions in the SAFE clubs, to ensure that they lead to behavior change
- Monitor activities in Safe clubs and Study Groups
- Monthly, Quarterly review meetings with Partners (CAMFED,FAWEZA)

<b>TASK 6.3 DEVELOP THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ENLIST LOCAL BUSINESS, NGO AND GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT IN ADVOCATING FOR AND IMPLEMENTING FREE OR INEXPENSIVE EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS FOR OVCs (15%)</b>
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### **Activities conducted during the quarter:**

#### **1. Meeting of the Project Coordination Committee Sub-Group on Community Schools:**

One meeting took place this quarter in June 2015. During the meetings participants shared experiences and coordinated training plans. TTL presented the results of its mid-line assessment to participants, including EGRA results; the preparation steps for the next National Symposium on Community Schools were also discussed. The Sub-Group will invite the MESVTEE Steering Committee to the next meeting in order to review progress made since the first National Symposium.

#### **2. Public Private Partnership:**

TTL has resumed discussion with TOTAL about renewing their support for community schools and TOTAL has agreed to fund the printing of story books, which stories were selected after a writing competition in community schools.

### **TASK 6.4 ENGAGE UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS TO CONDUCT TARGETED RESEARCH PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPROVED READING OUTCOMES FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND OVCS**

### **Activities conducted during the quarter:**

The major research activities related to finalizing the TTL midline impact evaluation report and disseminating findings, conducting field research for the third and fourth case study in the *TTL Case Study Series*, subsequent data analysis and drafting of the case study reports, and hiring the new TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist, who is expected to start on July 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Build interest within the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) and the academic community to conduct research relevant to improving the performance of community schools.**

EnCompass engaged four research partners in fieldwork for the third and fourth case studies: two lecturers from the University of Zambia (UNZA) School of Education, and two TTL Research Interns. The community school environment was new for the research partners, and the collaboration was the first opportunity for the interns to engage directly in data collection for applied research.

**Develop the capacity of MESVTEE and the academic community to implement research and evaluation related to the MESVTEE research agenda.**

The TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist and four research partners (including UNZA lecturers) selected schools, prepared research protocols, and spent 4 weeks total in Lusaka, Southern, and Western Province between April and June collecting data for the third and fourth case study. Case studies three and four focus on the exceptional performance of girls in grade 7

national exams in community schools and on the implementation of the re-entry to school policy in secondary schools. The cooperation provided partners with substantial “hands-on” field research experience in methods including semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, as well as an opportunity to improve their skills in data cleaning and analysis. TTL engaged the MESVTEE and other partners in selecting these topics in previous Quarters to ensure that the study responds to their priorities.

Feedback gathered from the research partners through a written feedback form indicates that they appreciated the good organization of the field work through TTL’s Research and Evaluation Specialist, and that they would like to conduct further research on the topics studied.

### **Time to Learn mid-term IMPACT evaluation**

Substantial effort was devoted to finalizing the TTL midline impact evaluation report drafted last Quarter, which was reviewed with TTL personnel on May 29, 2015. In preparation of this task, the TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist and Evaluation Associate facilitated a 1.5 day midline evaluation data consultation and feedback meeting with 18 TTL project staff on April 15th and 16th. Four TTL partners from different MESVTEE departments and a community school attended the first day of the meeting. The meeting focused on validating the midline impact evaluation draft report’s key findings, discussing their implications for TTL’s future interventions, and providing inputs to the conclusions and recommendations that were incorporated into the final midline impact evaluation report.

### **Preparation of Y4 performance evaluation**

In preparation of the upcoming Year 4 Performance Evaluation (Quarter 4 FY 2015-Quarter 1 FY 2016), the TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist and Evaluation Associate facilitated a half-day performance evaluation design meeting with 18 TTL project staff on April 16th. The meeting focused on developing TTL’s vision for the performance evaluation and identifying preliminary evaluation focus areas.

### **Dissemination and use of Research results to make improvements in policy and practice,**

A variety of dissemination events relating to the midline impact evaluation report and the *TTL Case Study Series* took place this Quarter.

The TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist facilitated two dissemination events of the midline impact evaluation report with different audiences:

1. MESVTEE and USAID. About 25 MESVTEE staff from different directorates, USAID personnel and representatives of TTL’s partner projects Read to Succeed and Room to Read attended a presentation on June 23<sup>th</sup>.
2. NGOs. About 15 representatives of local and international NGOs working on education attended a presentation on June 25<sup>th</sup>.



All midline presentations entailed discussions with the audiences. Both MESVTEE and NGOs showed high interest in TTL's research findings, which were largely similar to the findings of the partner projects.

TTL Provincial Outreach Coordinators continued to facilitate dissemination events for case studies one and two, which had started to take place in the last Quarter. In total, 52 provincial and district level MESVTEE staff in four provinces attended presentations.

All case study presentations entailed discussions with the audiences. To date, both the MESVTEE and local and international educational NGOs operating in Zambia have shown high interest in policy recommendations stemming from the first two case studies.

Some of the suggestions and recommendations made during the dissemination events include the following: there is a need for additional reading materials for both teachers and learners, a need for additional support in the area of listening and reading comprehension, teacher training at the college level needs to be improved, systematic formative monitoring should occur on a regular basis, and remedial activities for learners should be provided to address the low reading levels.

### **TTL Internship program**

TTL's internship program – supervised by the TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist – successfully underwent a major overhaul. Based on a series of reflection sessions with project management, staff who directly manage interns, and interns themselves, several reforms were put in place regarding the hiring process, the orientation, mentoring and areas of work of interns.

New interns now undergo a structured orientation phase including orientation sessions on different key topics as well as the review of key documents. Throughout their internship, the Research and Evaluation Specialist convenes a monthly meeting with the interns to address questions and receive feedback on their experience. A different technical specialist joins the meeting each time, discussing their position with the interns. Once during their internship, interns have the opportunity to improve their job-search related skills like writing application letters, professional emails and resumes as well as interviewing through structured guidance. Interns now also receive reference letters upon request.

Regarding intern's areas of work, they now rotate their position after 50% of their time in order to expose them to a larger variety of tasks, and participate in the biweekly all-staff meetings so that they can gain broader insights about the project. All interns now receive the opportunity to do field work.

The new procedures were extensively documented for improved knowledge management. In addition, the documentation of the internship program was greatly improved overall.

### **Plans for the next Quarter**

Year 4 Performance Evaluation Design will be reviewed by TTL/EDC in late July, and work will subsequently move quickly into protocol preparation and planning for data collectors' training,



which will occur in late August or early September. Case studies three and four will be finalized and submitted in August. The new TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist is expected to begin on July 14, and will have a 2 week overlap with the current TTL Research and Evaluation Specialist.

## **B. ADMINISTRATIVE**

The new TTL Copperbelt Provincial Outreach Coordinator (POC) was selected: Ms. Felistas Moono will start working at the end of July 2015 in TTL's Ndola office, after an orientation in the TTL Lusaka office.

The new TTL Monitoring Specialist, Mr. Kennedy Makulika, began work on 1 June 2015.

## **V. ANNEXES**

1. Success Stories
  2. List of Schools monitored during the quarter.
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